

Nutrition Education Providers In Your Community

Many communities have a wealth of information available to help your organization promote the nutrition benefits of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Focusing on nutrition can help your organization get the attention of individuals who might not be inclined to pick up SNAP informational materials. This gives your organization an opportunity to explain SNAP as a nutrition assistance program to potential applicants as well as employers, community leaders, and others, who might still associate SNAP with welfare programs. Learn more about SNAP nutrition education providers in your community and what role each organization can play to increase SNAP participation.

What is the goal of SNAP Nutrition Education?

The goal of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is to improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices within their limited budget and choose active lifestyles, as the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Food Guidance System (MyPyramid) recommend.

Why should my organization consider collaborating with SNAP Nutrition Education providers?

Outreach and SNAP Nutrition Education can work together to communicate messages about how SNAP can help needy families obtain healthy foods. The possibility of better nutrition can help generate interest in SNAP among potentially eligible persons as well as community workers serving that population. SNAP Nutrition Education providers have conducted needs assessments to identify which nutrition messages to promote and strategies for communicating these messages to SNAP-eligible population. They also have access to nutrition education materials that are consistent with national nutrition initiatives. By working together, outreach and nutrition education can communicate accurate, unified, and reinforcing messages that have a more powerful reach.

FNS recently developed a series of nutrition education and promotion materials targeting mothers entitled Loving Your Family, Feeding their Future: Nutrition Education Through the Food Stamp Program. The nutrition education messages are based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. These nutrition education messages address the needs of English and Spanish speaking mothers with limited literacy skills. This series of education materials includes an educator's handbook, four discussion sessions with accompanying participant handouts, participant guidebook, and an online educator's learning module with a flash video component. These materials were developed primarily for SNAP Nutrition Education participants, however, they can be used in other nutrition education settings with similar target audiences such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. Educators can access Loving Your Family... materials at <http://foodstamp.nal.usda.gov>.

Learn More About SNAP Nutrition Education

States often provide nutrition education to SNAP participants through contracts with the Cooperative Extension System, State Nutrition Networks, public health departments, and other organizations.

SNAP Nutrition Connection, a project of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service and the National Agricultural Library, maintains a list of State SNAP Nutrition Education providers. You can access it online at http://snap.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=15&tax_level=1, request a print copy by phone at 301-504-5719, or e-mail FSNC@nal.usda.gov.

You can also contact your State or local SNAP offices for information on SNAP Nutrition Education activities in your area.